

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 04753 121123Z

21

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 OMB-01

AID-20 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 NEA-10 EUR-25

DRC-01 /131 W

----- 056064

O 121045Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3643

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4753

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: TONLE CHAM FALLS AFTER TWO-YEAR DEFENSE

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO AMCONSULS CAN THO, DANANG AND
NHA TRANG APRIL 12, 1974 FROM AMCONSUL BIEN HOA REPEATED
FOR YOU. QUOTE:

BIEN HOA 179

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJ: TONLE CHAM FALLS AFTER TWO YEAR DEFENSE

1. AFTER BEING ISOLATED FOR TWO YEARS AND UNDER VIRTUALLY
CONTINUOUS NVA/VC ATTACK FOR MORE THAN A YEAR, TONLE CHAM ON
NORTHERN TAY NINH/BINH LONG BORDER (XT 602805) WAS APPARENTLY
OVERRUN EARLY MORNING HOURS OF APRIL 12. MR 3 HQ IS NOW TREATING
OUTPOST AS LOST. COURAGEOUS AND STUBBORN DEFENDERS WERE SOME 250
OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE 92ND RANGER BATTALION.

2. HEAVY ABF LAUNCHED AGAINST BASE, MANNED BY UNDERSTRENGTH
BATTALION, STARTING 1600 APRIL 11. ESTIMATED 900 ROUNDS 120MM,
82MM, 61MM MORTAR, AND B-40/41, TOGETHER WITH SMALL ARMS FIRE,
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 04753 121123Z

HIT GARRISON BETWEEN 1600 AND 2030. G-2 STATES INFANTRY, SAPPERS

AND POSSIBLY ARMOR USED IN ASSAULT. RADIO CONTACT WAS LOST AT 0200 APRIL 12.

3. HEAVY GROUND FOG AND LOW CLOUD COVER RENDERED GUNSHIP SUPPORT INEFFECTIVE DURING NIGHT. ARVN FIRED 155MM ARTILLERY SUPPORT, FIRING AT NEAR MAXIMUM RANGE FROM AN LOC, BUT WITH UNKNOWN RESULTS. VNAF AIRCRAFT IN AREA THIS MORNING REPORT GARBLED, FRAGMENTARY RADIO CONTACTS WITH SEVERAL SMALL RANGER GROUPS WHICH HAVE APPARENTLY EXFILTRATED PERIMETER AND DESCRIBE MOST BUNKERS AND ALL ANTENNAE AS "BLOWN AWAY." L-19 OBSERVATION AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN OPERATING IN AREA DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS OF APRIL 12 TRYING TO OBSERVE ACTIVITY AT OUTPOST AND ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH RADIO CONTACT WITH RANGER GROUPS WHICH ESCAPED.

4. TONLE CHAM WAS IMPORTANT NOT ONLY AS A SYMBOL OF GVN DETERMINATION TO DEFEND AGAINST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSION BUT ALSO AS AN OBSERVATION POST OVERLOOKING IMPORTANT ROAD LINKING COMMUNIST CONTROLLED AREAS IN CAMBODIA AND NORTHERN BINH LONG PROVINCE WITH NORTHERN TAY NINH AND SAIGON RIVER.

5. NVA/VC ATTACK AND CONQUEST OF TONLE CHAM IS CLEAR VIOLATION OF CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT. SIGNED PETERS UNQUOTE.
MARTIN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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